(d)   determining whether an overtime period is triggered in one of said plurality of lots; and

(e)   if an overtime period is triggered in said one of said plurality of lots, extending the auction for said one of said plurality of lots by an amount of time defined by said overtime extension parameter associated with said one of said plurality of lots.

13.   (Amended)   A method to control overtime in an electronic auction [of conducting a business-to-business online auction for custom industrial products or materials between a buyer and a plurality of potential sellers], comprising the steps of:

(a)   offering a lot, defined at least in part by a buyer, to a plurality of potential sellers, said lot having at least one product;

(b)   defining a closing time for said lot, wherein said closing time for said lot defines a time before which bids for the lot are to be submitted by a potential seller;

(c)   receiving a first bid from a potential seller for said lot;

(d)   identifying said first bid as a current best bid;

(e)   comparing each successively received bid to said current best bid, and identifying said successive bid as said current best bid if said successive bid is better than said current best bid;

(f)   within a first time interval of said closing time for said lot,

(i)   determining whether a received bid is better than said current best bid;

(ii)   if said received bid is better than said current best bid, identifying said received bid as said current best bid and extending said closing time for said first lot by a second time interval;

(iii)   if said received bid is not better than said current best bid, determining whether said received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria; and

(iv)   if said received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria, extending said closing time for said first lot by a third time interval.

~~24.~~   (Amended)   A method <u>to control overtime in an electronic auction</u> [of conducting an online auction between a buyer and a plurality of potential sellers], comprising the steps of:

(a)   offering a lot, defined at least in part by a buyer, to a plurality of potential sellers, said lot having at least one product;

(b)   defining a closing time for said lot, wherein said closing time for said lot defines a time before which bids for the lot are to be submitted by a potential seller;

(c)   within a first time interval of said closing time for said lot, determining if

a received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria,

wherein said at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria can be satisfied

if said received bid is not better than a current best bid; and

(d)   if said received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension

criteria, extending said closing time for said first lot by a second time interval.

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89.   (Amended)   A computer program product for enabling a processor in a computer

system to control overtime in an electronic auction [conduct a business-to-business online

auction for custom industrial products or materials between a buyer and a plurality of potential

sellers], said computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in

said medium for causing an application program to execute on the computer system, said

computer readable program code means comprising:

a first computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to offer

a plurality of lots, defined at least in part by a buyer, to a plurality of potential sellers, each of

said plurality of lots having at least one product;

a second computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to

define a closing time for each of said plurality of lots, wherein a closing time for a lot defines a

time before which bids for the lot are to be submitted by a potential seller;

a third computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to define an overtime extension parameter for each of said plurality of lots, said overtime extension parameter indicating a length of an overtime period for an associated lot, wherein an overtime extension parameter for a lot is based upon characteristics of one or more items in the lot;

a fourth computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to determine whether an overtime period is triggered in one of said plurality of lots; and

a fifth computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to extend the auction for said one of said plurality of lots by an amount of time defined by said overtime extension parameter associated with said one of said plurality of lots, if an overtime period is triggered in said one of said plurality of lots.

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-93- (Amended) A system to control overtime in an electronic auction [for conducting a business-to-business online auction for custom industrial products or materials between a buyer and a plurality of potential sellers], comprising:

means for offering a plurality of lots, defined at least in part by a buyer, to a plurality of potential sellers, each of said plurality of lots having at least one product;

means for defining a closing time for each of said plurality of lots, wherein a closing time for a lot defines a time before which bids for the lot are to be submitted by a potential seller;

means for defining an overtime extension parameter for each of said plurality of lots, said overtime extension parameter indicating a length of an overtime period for an associated lot,

wherein an overtime extension parameter for a lot is based upon characteristics of one or more items in the lot;

means for determining whether an overtime period is triggered in one of said plurality of lots; and

means for extending the auction for said one of said plurality of lots by an amount of time defined by said overtime extension parameter associated with said one of said plurality of lots, if an overtime period is triggered in said one of said plurality of lots.

97. (Amended) A computer program product for enabling a processor in a computer system to control overtime in an electronic auction [conduct a business-to-business online auction for custom industrial products or materials between a buyer and a plurality of potential sellers], said computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in said medium for causing an application program to execute on the computer system, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a first computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to offer a lot, defined at least in part by a buyer, to a plurality of potential sellers, said lot having at least one product;

a second computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to define a closing time for said lot, wherein said closing time for said lot defines a time before

which bids for the lot are to be submitted by a potential seller;

a third computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to receive a first bid from a potential seller for said lot;

a fourth computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to identify said first bid as a current best bid;

a fifth computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to compare each successively received bid to said current best bid, and identify said successive bid as said current best bid if said successive bid is better than said current best bid; and

a sixth computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to determine whether a received bid is better than said current best bid; and if said received bid is better than said current best bid, identify said received bid as current best bid and extend said closing time for said first lot by a second time interval; and if said received bid is not better than said current best bid, determine whether said received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria and if said received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria, extend said closing time for said first lot by a third time interval.

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108. (Amended) A system to control overtime in an electronic auction [for conducting a business-to-business online auction for custom industrial products or materials between a buyer and a plurality of potential sellers], comprising:

means for offering a lot, defined at least in part by a buyer, to a plurality of potential

sellers, said lot having at least one product;

means for defining a closing time for said lot, wherein said closing time for said lot defines a time before which bids for the lot are to be submitted by a potential seller;

means for receiving a first bid from a potential seller for said lot;

means for identifying said first bid as a current best bid;

means for comparing each successively received bid to said current best bid, and identifying said successive bid as said current best bid if said successive bid is better than said current best bid; and

means for determining whether a received bid is better than said current best bid; and if said received bid is better than said current best bid, means for identifying said received bid as said current best bid and extending said closing time for said first lot by a second time interval; and if said received bid is not better than said current best bid, means for determining whether said received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria; and if said received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria, extending said closing time for said first lot by a third time interval.

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~~119.~~ (Amended) A computer program product for enabling a processor in a computer system to <u>control overtime in an electronic auction</u> [conduct an online auction between a buyer and a plurality of potential sellers], said computer program product comprising:

a computer usable medium having computer readable program code means embodied in

said medium for causing an application program to execute on the computer system, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a first computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to offer a lot, defined at least in part by a buyer, to a plurality of potential sellers, said lot having at least one product;

a second computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to define a closing time for said lot, wherein said closing time for said lot defines a time before which bids for the lot are to be submitted by a potential seller;

a third computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to determine if a received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria within a first time interval of said closing time for said lot, wherein said at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria can be satisfied if said received bid is not better than a current best bid; and

a fourth computer readable program code means for enabling the computer system to extend said closing time for said first lot by a second time interval if said received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria.

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~~129.~~   (Amended)   A system to control overtime in an electronic auction [for conducting an online auction between a buyer and a plurality of potential sellers], comprising:

means for offering a lot, defined at least in part by a buyer, to a plurality of potential sellers, said lot having at least one product;

means for defining a closing time for said lot; wherein said closing time for said lot defines a time before which bids for the lot are to be submitted by a potential seller;

means for determining if a received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria, wherein said at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria can be satisfied if said received bid is not better than a current best bid, within a first interval of said closing time for said lot; and

means for extending said closing time for said first lot by a second time interval, if said received bid satisfies at least one behind-market bid lot extension criteria.

Please add new claims 139-176 as follows:

--139. A method to control overtime in an electronic auction, comprising:

a)   defining a first time interval, a second time interval, a first overtime condition and a first closing time for a first lot;

b)   determining whether said first overtime condition occurs during said first time interval; and

c)   extending said first closing time using said second time interval in accordance with said determination.

140.   The method of claim 139, wherein said first time interval and said second time interval are equal.

141.   The method of claim 139, wherein said first time interval and said second time interval are different.

142.   The method of claim 139, wherein said first time interval is an overtime trigger interval representing a time interval during which an overtime condition can cause extension of a closing time.

143.   The method of claim 139, wherein said second time interval is an overtime extension interval representing a time interval to extend a closing time.

144.   The method of claim 139, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

    receiving a plurality of bids;

    assigning an ordinal rank to each bid from a best bid to a worst bid; and

    receiving a bid having an ordinal rank that is within a predefined number of rank ordinal positions of said best bid.

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145.   The method of claim 144, wherein said predefined number of rank ordinal positions
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equals one.

146. The method of claim 139, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids each having a bid price;

ordering each bid from a best bid price to a worst bid price; and

receiving a bid having a bid price within a predefined price of said best bid price.

147. The method of claim 139, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids each having a bid price;

ordering each bid from a best bid price to a worst bid price; and

receiving a bid having a bid price within a predefined percentage of said best bid price.

148. The method of claim 139, wherein said first overtime condition comprises receiving a bid from a predefined bidder.

~~149.~~ The method of claim ~~148,~~ wherein said predefined bidder is an incumbent bidder.

150. The method of claim 139, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a first set of bids;

determining a first frequency for said first set of bids; and

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receiving a second set of bids at a second frequency.

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~~151.~~ The method of claim ~~150,~~ 59, wherein said second frequency is higher than said first

frequency.

152. The method of claim 139, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids from a group of bidders;

generating a statistical analysis parameter for said received bids; and

matching said statistical analysis parameter with a predefined statistical analysis

parameter.

153. The method of claim 139, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids from a bidder;

generating a statistical analysis parameter for said received bids; and

matching said statistical analysis parameter with a predefined statistical analysis

parameter.

154. The method of claim 139, further comprising:

modifying at least one of said first time interval, said second time interval and said first

overtime condition; and

performing (b) and (c) using said at least one modified first time interval, second time interval and first overtime condition.

155.   The method of claim 139, further comprising:

defining a third time interval, a fourth time interval, a second overtime condition and a second closing time for a second lot;

determining whether said second overtime condition occurs during said third time interval; and

extending said second closing time using said fourth time interval if said second overtime condition occurs.

156.   The method of claim 139, wherein said first lot comprises at least one of a custom industrial product and material, and at least one of said first time interval, said second time interval and said first overtime condition is defined in accordance with said at least one of a custom industrial product and material.

157.   The method of claim 139, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids each having a bid price;

ordering each bid from a best bid price to a worst bid price; and

receiving a bid having a bid price other than said best bid price.

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158.   A machine-readable medium whose contents cause a computer system to control overtime in an electronic auction, by performing:

    a)   defining a first time interval, a second time interval, a first overtime condition and a first closing time for a first lot;

    b)   determining whether said first overtime condition occurs during said first time interval; and

    c)   extending said first closing time using said second time interval in accordance with said determination.

159.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first time interval and said second time interval are equal.

160.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first time interval and said second time interval are different.

161.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first time interval is an overtime trigger interval representing a time interval during which an overtime condition can cause extension of a closing time.

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162.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said second time interval is an overtime extension interval representing a time interval to extend a closing time.

163.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids;

assigning an ordinal rank to each bid from a best bid to a worst bid; and

receiving a bid having an ordinal rank that is within a predefined number of rank ordinal positions of said best bid.

164.   The machine-readable medium of claim 163, wherein said predefined number of rank ordinal positions equals one.

165.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids each having a bid price;

ordering each bid from a best bid price to a worst bid price; and

receiving a bid having a bid price within a predefined price of said best bid price.

166.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first overtime condition

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comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids each having a bid price;

ordering each bid from a best bid price to a worst bid price; and

receiving a bid having a bid price within a predefined percentage of said best bid price.

167.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first overtime condition comprises receiving a bid from a predefined bidder.

-168.   The machine-readable medium of claim 167, wherein said predefined bidder is an incumbent bidder.

169.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a first set of bids;

determining a first frequency for said first set of bids; and

receiving a second set of bids at a second frequency.

-170.   The machine-readable medium of claim 169, wherein said second frequency is higher than said first frequency.

171.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids from a group of bidders;

generating a statistical analysis parameter for said received bids; and

matching said statistical analysis parameter with a predefined statistical analysis parameter.

172.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids from a bidder;

generating a statistical analysis parameter for said received bids; and

matching said statistical analysis parameter with a predefined statistical analysis parameter.

173.   The machine-readable medium of claim 158, further comprising:

modifying at least one of said first time interval, said second time interval and said first overtime condition; and

performing (b) and (c) using said at least one modified first time interval, second time interval and first overtime condition.

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174. The machine-readable medium of claim 158, further comprising:

defining a third time interval, a fourth time interval, a second overtime condition and a second closing time for a second lot;

determining whether said second overtime condition occurs during said third time interval; and

extending said second closing time using said fourth time interval if said second overtime condition occurs.

175. The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first lot comprises at least one of a custom industrial product and material, and at least one of said first time interval, said second time interval and said first overtime condition is defined in accordance with said at least one of a custom industrial product and material.

176. The machine-readable medium of claim 158, wherein said first overtime condition comprises:

receiving a plurality of bids each having a bid price;

ordering each bid from a best bid price to a worst bid price; and

receiving a bid having a bid price other than said best bid price.--

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